

Selectmen set goals to guide town's future

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Duxbury

DUXBURY — Selectmen have agreed on four goals to help guide Duxbury into the 21st century.

Implementing the goals, which were informally adopted during a two-hour workshop earlier this week, will require the cooperation of a number of elected and appointed committees and boards.

Selectmen said the goals reflect the priorities of the 26 percent of registered voters who in December 1995 responded to a nine-page questionnaire about the future of Duxbury.

"Since we asked our citizens to participate in this, they need to see their concerns reflected in our goals and objectives," said selectmen Chairwoman Margaret Kearney.

The goals, and some of the specific, measurable objectives selectmen agreed on to help implement them, are:

- Improve the financial management of the town by revising the way the annual town budget is prepared. Officials will try to agree in advance on a specific fiscal objective, such as level funding or spending to the limit of available revenues.

They also will involve all interested parties, such as the finance committee and fiscal advisory committee, from the start of the budget process each fall.

- Strengthen local governance by increasing citizen participation and improving communication and cooperation among town departments.

- Expand community services by solving water quality problems, re-opening the Ashdod fire station, finding a permanent home for the council on aging, achieving the per-pupil spending level required by the

Education Reform Act, completing a new public library and developing a septic management plan.

- Maintain the character of the town by completing an updated land-use plan and implementing key provisions of the recently adopted open space and recreation plan.

Three years ago, when she first headed the three-member board, Kearney initiated the task of drafting a long-range plan.

At first, it was going to take two years and culminate in a report to the 1996 annual town meeting.

But the plan wasn't ready then, and it wasn't ready for this year's annual town meeting last month, either.

But now the pieces are beginning to come together.

"Here's how your town fathers and mothers see the priorities for the next five years," said Selectman Friend Weiler in offering the goals.

Voters responding to the survey said they wanted to maintain the residential character of the town, maintain resident access to Duxbury Beach, ensure an adequate supply of clean drinking water, continue to provide high-quality public schools and keep the tax rate stable.

Town Manager Rocco Longo, Town Planner Thomas Broadrick and consultant Victor DeSantis of Raynham helped the selectmen agree on the goals and various objectives.

DeSantis said a final report will include specific dates for implementing the objectives and identify which committee or board is responsible for each.